fee can be imposed on the violator. The Committee has not made any specific recommendation regarding allowing/regularising additional dwelling unit on residential plots.

The Government has examined the recommendations of the Committee in consultation with local bodies and Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and has decided to undertake modification of the development control norms in respect of plotted residential development by amendment to the Master Plan for Delhi (MPD) 2001, since the proposed MPD 2021 is only at the draft stage.

Accordingly, as per the statutory procedure DDA has issued a public notice on 21.7.2006 with the approval of Government, under section 11 A of Delhi Development Act, 1957 calling for suggestions and objections from the public within a period of 30 days to the proposed modifications in the Master Plan for Delhi 2001.

It may be mentioned that all amendments carried out in the MPD 2001 till the date of final notification of MPD 2021 will automatically get incorporated in the final MPD 2021.

Independent news channel

*178. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are planning to promote a independent international-news channel based out of India to counter the bias of existing international news channels;

(b) if so, the details of the plan and the action taken in this regard; and

(c) the details of the steps being planned to ensrue autonomy and independence of the news channels to be launched?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (c) Government is exploring various options of projecting India's economic, social and cultural development to the rest of the world, including the feasibility of an International Television Channel. Since the deliberations are in a nascent stage, no action plan or time-frame can be indicated.

Opening of Nathu-La Pass

*179. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Nathu-La pass in Sikkim has been formally opened recently for passage of export/import traffic between India and China;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the protocol and rule to be observed by both sides;

(c) the reasons for exposing such a sensitive region at the border State of our country, *inter alia,* to Chinese surveillance;

(d) whether talks are being held with China for their ceding Indian territory which continue to remain occupied by them; and

(e) if so, the status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Border trade between India and China through Nathula resumed on July 6, 2006. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Expanding Border Trade, signed on June 23, 2003, provided for the use of Nathula as the pass for entry and exit of persons, means of transport and commodities engaged in border trade between the two countries.

(b) All the provisions of the Memorandum on the Resumption of Border Trade between India and China, singned on December 13, 1991, and the Protocol on Entry and Exit Procedures for Border Trade signed on July 1, 1992, will be applicable to border trade through Nathula. The border trade through Nathula will be conducted from June 1 to September 30 every year with the provision that the two sides may, through mutual agreement, extend or reduce this period. Border trade will be conducted for four days a week from Monday to Thursday. The border trade markets, (Changgu border trade market at Sherathang on the Indian side and the Renqinggang border trade market on the Chinese side) will be open from 07-30 to 15-30 hours Indian Standard Time on these days.

(c) Border trade through Nathula is expected to bring economic benefits to the people of the area. In working out the modalities for border trade through Nathula, all aspects inlcuding security were taken into consideration. The MoU of June 23, 2003, which provides for the resumption of border trade through Nathula, was also a reflection of China's acceptance of Sikkim as an integral part of India.

(d) and (e) The Special Representatives of India and China on the boundary question are continuing their discussions to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relations the framework of the boundary settlement. The two countries signed the Agreement on the

Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question on April 11, 2005. The last round of discussions between the Special Representatives was held in Beijing and Xian from June 25 to 27, 2006.

Upgradation of State Highways into National Highways

*180. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Governments have requested the Centre to take over the responsibility of some of their major highways for the purpose of upgradation into National Highways; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Centre's reaction thereto, with special reference to Karnataka and the Bangalore-Hassan-Mangalore section?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of the proposals for declaration of new National-Highways received from the State Governments are given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below). Bangalore-Hassan-Mangalore Road in Karnataka is already a National Highway No. 48. At present, emphasis is on development of existing National Highways and declaration of new National Highways in the country including Karnataka is not envisaged.

Statement

Proposals for declaration of New National Highways

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Details of Roads/Stretches	Length in Kms
I.	Andhra Pradesh	1. Nellore-Atmakur-Badvel-Mydukure-Gooty	314
		2. Hyderabad-Ramagundam-Mancherial-Chanda	330
		3. Hyderabad-Srisailam-Dornala-Nandyal	300
		4. Gundugolnu-Nallageria-devarapalli-Vernagiri road	83
		5. Krishnapatnam port-Nellore-Chellakara near Chitradurg	470
		6. Hyderabad-Medak-Bodhan-Basar-Luxettipet	395
		7. Kakinada-Dwarapuydi-Rajamundry-Kovvur-Suryapeta	300
		8. Rajamundry-Maredumilli-Chinturu-Bhoopalapatnam	400
		9. Kurnool-Atmatur-Dornala-Thokapalli-Pericherla-Guntur	300
		10. Kodad-Miryalaguda-Devarakonda-Tandur-Chincholi	240
		11. Bellary-Adoni-Raichut-Mehboobnagar-Jadcherla	200
		12. Kalingapatnam-Srikakulum-Raygadh to NH 201	120
		13. Sironcha Mahadevapur-Tungaturthi-Erpedu-Renigunta	650